

## **“On the eighth day, the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised.” (12:3)**

One day the *Sefas Emes* asked one of his close *chassidim* to take his two young sons, (*Rav*) Avraham Mordechai and (*Rav*) Moshe Betzalel, to a certain Jew in Warsaw for a *brachah*, blessing. The person left the next day in search of this Jew whom he assumed must certainly be a famous *tzaddik*, righteous man. He arrived in Warsaw and, after some inquiry, he discovered that the individual he sought was actually a simple, common Jew.

The man, indeed, had no idea why the famous *Rebbe* of Gur would send his two sons to him for a blessing. Yet, at the behest of the messenger, he took the two boys and blessed them profusely. The *chassid* returned to Gur, thinking that this man must be one of the *lamed-vav tzaddikim*, thirty-six righteous Jews who live common lives and keep their piety secret.

When he returned to the *Sefas Emes*, he gathered up his courage to ask the *Rebbe* why he had sent his sons to this seemingly simple Jew. “True,” answered the *Sefas Emes*, “he gives the impression of being a simple Jew which, indeed, he is. However, he once demonstrated such unparalleled devotion to a *mitzvah* that in Heaven he was granted *tzaddik* status. It happened that when his son was born, this Jew did not have penny to his name. He was so destitute that he could not afford to pay for the bare necessities to perform a *Bris Milah*. What did he do? He sold his bed and slept on the floor, so that he could have enough funds to pay for a *Bris*. He was left with nothing. Yet, he did not care. He was able to perform the *mitzvah* of bringing his son into the covenant of Avraham *Avinu*. This action caused such a stir in Heaven that he was granted a unique reward – every blessing that issues forth from his mouth will be fulfilled. In fact, he himself is unaware of his great power. Do you now understand why I sent my sons to him?

We should now have an inkling of the significance of the *mitzvah* of *Bris Milah* and the reward for adhering to its precepts.